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Capt. CRANSTOUN's  
A C C O U N T

Of the poisoning the

Late Mr. FRANCIS BLANDY,

OF

*Henley upon Thames, Oxfordshire.*

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ГРАДОВАЯ  
СИМФОНИЯ  
С А



Любви Франции Франдъ

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Capt. CRANSTOUN's  
A C C O U N T

Of the poisoning the

Late Mr. FRANCIS BLANDY,

O F

*Henley upon Thames, Oxfordshire:*

Declared solemnly by him before he died, at  
*Furnes, in Flanders, on the 30th of November*  
last.

In which are contained

Some Particulars of his private Marriage with the  
late unfortunate Miss *Blandy*; and Copies of three Letters  
from the said Miss *Blandy*, to him in *Northumberland*,  
bearing the several Dates of *June 30, July 16,*  
and *August 1, 1751*; which was just preceding the  
poisoning of the said Mr. *Blandy*, which sets that whole  
tragedical Affair in a true Light.

W I T H A N

Account of Mr. *Cranstoun's* Distresses, from the Time he  
absconded to his Death, which was attended with the most  
terrible Agonies: And in which Part is inserted a Narrative  
of some artful and crafty Villanies committed by the fa-  
mous, or more properly, infamous Capt. *P——w*, in  
*France and Flanders*, while Mr. *Cranstoun* was in those Coun-  
tries.

The whole published for the Satisfaction of the Publick.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for R. RICHARDS, the Corner of *Bernard's-Inn*, near  
the *Black Swan, Holborn*.

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Сборник ТИУ

B O A R D I N G .

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**P R E F A C E**

TO THE

**P U B L I C K .**

*A*S the Publick are in great Doubts concerning the Truth of the cruel, and almost unparalleled Murder of the late Mr. Blandy, of Henley upon Thames, in Oxfordshire, by Reason of the mysterious Accounts, published as the Confession of his Daughter, who was executed for that cruel Parricide, and which were done by her own Desire and Direction; the following Pages are thought necessary to be made publick, by which the World may be satisfied concerning that tragical Affair; which is from the Words of Captain William-Henry Cranstoun, hitherto supposed, but now out of Doubt, to have been concerned with her in that black Crime; and also from original Letters of hers, and Papers found immediately after his Decease, in his Portmanteau-Trunk in his Room, in the House of Mons. Maulfet, the Sign of the Burgundy-Cross, in the Town of Furnes, in the

## P R E F A C E.

the Austrian Netherlands, where he died on Thursday the 30th of November last, and was buried in the Cathedral Church there, in great Funeral-Pomp on the second of December.

It is thought needless to premise any more, only to assure the Publick, that what is contained in the following short Tract is authentick, and gives an Account of the Vicissitudes of Fortune, which attended Captain Cranstoun, from the Time of his absconding for Prevention of his being apprehended, to the Time of his Death, which was attended with great Torments.



Capt.

[S.]

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## Capt. CRANSTOUN's Account

Late Mr. FRANCIS BLANDY,

OF

*Henley upon Thames, Oxfordshire.*

MISS *Mary Blandy* being suspected of poisoning her Father, Mr. *Francis Blandy*, who died in great Agonies, on the 14th of *August*, 1751, was examined by the Mayor and Coroner of *Henley upon Thames*; and there appearing, upon the Oaths of the Servants to the Deceased, and others, sufficient Grounds to think that Miss *Blandy*, with the Assistance and Advice of Capt. *William-Henry Cranstoun*, was the Parricide, she was accordingly committed to *Oxford Castle*; and a proper Warrant and Messenger was sent, in order to apprehend the said Capt. *Cranstoun*, who was then supposed to be either in *Northumberland*, or *Scotland*, with his Mother; but the Affair being in the News-Papers, it reached the Knowledge of a certain Person

son of Distinction, who was a Relation of the Captain's, before the Messenger and Warrant got down, who informed him thereof; upon which the Captain thought it most advisable to abscond: And being secreted from that Time, in *England*, till the Beginning of *March 1752*, when Miss was tried at *Oxford Assizes*, and found guilty, it was then thought proper for him to get out of the Kingdom; as upon her Trial it appeared, beyond all Doubt, that he was principally concerned in that Murder, and furnished her with the Powders that compleated the vile Deed.

On the eighteenth Day of *March*, at which Time she lay under Sentence of Death, he embarked in a Vessel for *Bologne* in *France*, and went by the Name of *Dunbar*, a Female distant Relation of his, of that Name, being there at that Time; who was married to one *R—*, and who was there on Account of some Debts he had contracted in *Great-Britain*.

*Cranbourn* arrived at *Bologne* on the 27th Day of the Month of *March*, which soon being known, he was obliged to be kept secret in that Town; as some of the Relations of his Wife, who were Officers in one of the *Scotch Regiments* in the *French Service*, upon hearing of his being there, declared they would destroy him,



not only for his cruel and villainous Usage to his Wife and Child, but also as being a Murderer; and went purposely to *Bologne*.

He continued at *Bologne* in Secret till the 20th of July last, when he absconded privately in the Morning early, with the said *R*—, and his Wife, who were obliged to fly, on Account of an Arret of the Parliament of *Paris*, which had ordered him to pay 1000 Livres, and Cost of a Law-Suit, to the famous, or, more properly, infamous Captain *P——w*, so well known here: And as that Affair was something remarkable, I shall here give the Reader a brief Relation of it, notwithstanding it is foreign to Mr. *Cranstoun's* Affair, which, as it will take up but little Room, I am almost persuaded will not be disagreeable to the Reader.

A certain *Irish* Nobleman being at *Bologne*, on Account of Debts he owed in *England*, Capt. *P——w* being there at the same Time, got acquainted with the above-named *Irish* Lord. At this Time Mr. *R*—, who was married to Mr. *Cranstoun's* Relation, as above-named, was a Merchant in that Town; and who, together with many more of the Merchants of the Place, was taken in very considerably by the said *Irish* Lord.

The above-nam'd Lord having got as deep in Debt as he possibly could, and his being so intimately acquainted with the Captain, who lived very profusely with my Lord, on the Money he had got upon Credit ; this R—, with the Rest of that Nobleman's Creditors, began to press his Lordship for their Money ; and his Lordship finding it impossible to weather the Storm off much longer, having told them, from Time to Time, that he was to have great Remittances from his Steward ; and P——w puffing his Lordship off greatly to the Creditors, his Lordship secretly got away from *Bologne*, in a Vessel that was bound for *Ireland*.

His Lordship being gone, the Creditors all agreed (affirming that P——w was concerned in facilitating his Escape, and cheating them) to apply to the Magistrates of the City of *Bologne*, for a Process against P——w, for their several Debts due to them from his Lordship, as he was not only concerned in helping him to make his Escape, but had partaken largely of the Money.

Upon their Application P——w was arrested, and cast by the Magistrates of *Bologne* afterwards in the Law-Suit ; who appealing to the Parliament of *Paris*, against the Decree and  
Judg-

Judgment of the Magistrates of *Bologne*; they, on hearing the Cause on both Sides, reversed the Decree of the Magistrates of *Bologne*, and issued in *May* last an Arret, that his Lordship's Creditors should pay to the Captain, as Damages for his false Imprisonment, Costs, and Scandal he had sustained by the Prosecution of their Suit, 3000 Livres, besides all his Costs in both Courts; and also that they should be at the Expence of Printing and Paper, for 1500 Copies of the said Arret, which were to be stuck up on the Exchanges, and other publick Places, in the several Cities and great Towns in *France*; which was accordingly done, the latter End of the said Month of *May*, pursuant to the said Arret.

Mr. *Cranstoun* about this Time received a Bill of 60*l.* from *Scotland*, payable in *London*; which Mr. *R*— went privately to *London* with, and got the Money for; which was all the Remittances *Cranstoun* ever had to the Time of his Death, from *Great-Britain*.

Mr. *R*— being returned to *Bologne* with the Cash in *July*, and not being able to satisfy his Part of the Arret of the Parliament of *Paris*, to the Captain, and dreading the fatal Consequence thereof, privately absconded, as is related before, with his Wife and *Cranstoun*, to *Ostend*, in the Queen of *Hungary*'s Territories,  
as

as a Sanctuary from the Arret of the French Parliament ; where they continued only about fourteen Days, and then removed to *Furnes*, and took up their Abode at the House known by the Sign of the *Burgundy Cross*, where Mr. R— died in September, and *Cranstoun* the 30th of November following.

During the Time of his living at *Furnes*, he always went by the Name of *Dunbar*, and first Cousin to Mrs. R—.

Capt. P—w, on the Credit of this Arret of Parliament, put up for a great Man ; who being known too well at *Bologne* to live there, either with Respect or Honour, removed to a Town in *France*, call'd *Somers*, nine Miles from *Bologne*, in the Road to *Paris*, where he took the grandest House in the Place ; but his Fortune being only outside Shew, as it was when in *England*, in September he absconded from thence ; and was obliged to fly into the Queen of *Hungary's* Country for Protection, having contracted large Debts in *France*.

The Captain now began his old Tricks ; for at *Brussells*, going for a *London Merchant*, he obtained a Parcel of fine Lace, some Pieces of Velvets, and other Things, to the Amount of near 200*l.* for which he gave the Gentleman of

*Brussells*

*Brussels* a pretended Bill for 321*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.* of a Banker's in *London*, and on the Payment of the said Bill, he was to have had another large Parcel of Goods.

The Bill was sent to *England* for Payment; but the Captain had fled before the Return of a Letter, which informed the Tradesman that it was a counterfeit Bill; whereupon they pursued him, and soon found that the Goods he had obtained, were shipped on Board a Vessel for *England*, at *Flushing*, a Sea-Port in *Zealand*, belonging to the States of *Holland*, from which Place the Captain had been gone three Days; that was the last Account that Mrs. *R—* and *Cranstoun* ever heard of him.

I shall now proceed to the Account given by Captain *Cranstoun*, concerning the poisoning of Mr. *Blandy*; in which I shall insert three Letters, bearing Date the 30th of *June*, the 16th of *July*, and the 18th of *August*, 1751; all directed for the Honourable *William-Henry Cranstoun*, Esq; which were found among his Papers at his Death; all being judged by the near Similitude of the Writings, to have been wrote by one Person; and tho' no Name was subscribed at the Bottom of either, yet, by their Contents, they plainly shew from whom they were sent.

Mr.

Mr. Cranftoun, at his first Coming into France, talked very little concerning the Affair of Mr. Blandy's Death ; but some Time after, having read the Account published in *London*, (by the Divine that attended Miss *Blandy* in her Confinement) as her own Confession, and at her Desire ; which was brought him by Mr. R—, when he came from *London*, from receiving the 60*L.* Bill before-mentioned, he began to be more open upon that Head to Mr. R—, particularly in vindicating himself, and blaming her for Ingratitude ; for he said, she was as much the Occasion of the unfortunate Deed as himself ; which will more fully appear from the following Relation which he gave of it himself.

That they having contracted so great a Friendship and mutual Love, which was absolutely strengthened by a private Marriage of her own proposing, lest he should prove ungrateful to her (which he said were her own Words) after so material an Intimacy, and leave her, and go and live with his real Wife ; and her Mother being dead, she and he, the first Time they met after her Mother's Decease, (which he believed was about 9 or 10 Months before Mr. *Blandy* died, and which was the last Time he was at *Henley*) began to consult how they should get the old Gentleman out of the Way, she proposing, as soon

soon as they could get Possession of the Effects of the Father, to go both into *Northumberland*, and live upon it with his Mother : That he did propose the Method that was afterwards put in Practice, and she very readily came into it ; and the whole Affair was settled between them, when he left *Henley* the last Time, and never before.

He frequently declared, that he believed her Mother was a very virtuous Woman, and blamed her much, for giving such a ludicrous, as well as foreign Account, of some Transactions between him and her Mother, in her Narrative ; and hoped, he said, that what was published as her solemn Declaration, *That she did not know that the Powder which he had sent her, with some Peebles, and which she had administered to her Father, were of a poisonous Quality,* was a Falsehood, and published without her Knowledge, as it appeared to him the same was not done till after she was dead ; for that she was sensible of what Quality they were, and for what Purpose sent, and particularly by the Effect they had on a Woman, who was a Servant in her Father's Family sometime before, as she had wrote him Word.

It will not be improper, in this Place, to insert the Letters, as they tend to the Confirmation of what Mr. *Cranstoun* had declared.

## LETTER I.

*Dear Willy,*

THESE, I hope, will find you in Health, as they leave me, but not in so much Perplexity ; for I have endeavoured to do as directed by yours, with the Contents of your Presents, and they will not mix properly.

The old Woman that chairs sometimes in the House, having drank a little Liquor in which I had put some is very bad ; and I am conscious of the Affair being discovered, without you can put me into some better, or more proper Method of using them. When you write, let it be as mystically as you please, lest an Interception should happen to your Letter, for I shall easily understand it. When I think of the Affair in Hand, I am in great Distress of Mind, and endeavour to bear up under it as well as I can ; but should be glad if you was near me, to help to support my fleeting Spirits : But why should I say so, or desire any such Thing, when I consider your cogent Reasons for being at a Distance ; as it might, as soon as the Affair is compleated, be the Occasion of a bad Consequence to us both.

I have

I have nothing more to add, but only desire you would not be long before you send me your Answer.

*Yours, affectionately, &c.*  
June 30, 1751.

[The Superscription of this Letter, and the next following, was almost rubbed out, so could not be exactly seen; but as the Word Berwick was quite plain, as well as his Name, it is supposed they were directed as the third Letter was.]

## LETTER II.

Dear Willy,  
I Received yours safe of the 11th Instant, and I am glad to hear you are well. I particularly understand what you mean, and I'll polish the Peebles as well as I can, for there shall not be wanting any Thing in my Power, to do the Business effectually. They begin to come brighter by the new Method I have taken; and as soon as I find the good Effects of the Scheme, you shall have Intelligence with all convenient Speed. Adieu, for this Time, my Spirits damping much; but pray God keep us in Health, till we have the Happiness of seeing each other.

July 16, 1751.

*Yours, affectionately, &c.*

## LETTER III.

Dear Willy,

I HAVE been in great Anxiety of Mind since last Post-Day, by not hearing from you. Your Letter of the 24th of last Month, I received safe Yesterday, and am somewhat enlivened in my Spirits by understanding you are well. I am going forward with all convenient Speed in the Business; and have not only a fatiguing Time of it, but am sometimes in the greatest Frights, there being constantly about me so many to be kept insensible of the Affair. You may expect to hear again from me soon; and rest yourself assured, that tho' I suffer more Horrors of Mind, than I do at this Time, which I think is impossible, I will pursue that, which is the only Method, I am sensible, left, of ever being happy together. I hope, by my next, to inform you that the Business is completed.

August 1, 1751. Yours, affectionately, &c.

1751. van paaij en tot deel 2. 1752.

Directed for the Honourable Mr. William-Henry Cranstoun, to be left at the Post-House, at Berwick.

By

By these Letters, and the Account which Cranston himself had given, it plainly appears, that the Murder of Mr. Blandy had been consulted some Time; and that it must be supposed, that the Powders had been attempted, if not absolutely given him in his Victuals, or Liquor, before the Time they were put into his Gruel, as was discovered by the Maid-Servant, and which proved the Cause of his Death.

Also by these Letters it is most reasonable to believe, that what was meant in the last, by the Words, *Tho' I suffer more Horrors of Mind, than I do at this Time, I will pursue;* that it came from the unfortunate and infatuated Miss Blandy, and that poisoning her Father was then fully resolved on by her; which reasonable Supposition is much strengthened by the subsequent Words in the same Letter; viz. *I hope in my next, to inform you that the Business is compleated.* And I really think it can admit of no Doubt, as the administering the Powders to him in his Water-Gruel, which was the Cause of his Death, was but four Days after the Date of this Letter; for it appears by its Date, to be sent on Thursday the first of August, and Monday the fifth of the same Month, she acknowledged she put the Powders into the Gruel; which was proved by Dr. Addington, and Dr. Lewis, on her Trial, to be

be the Cause of Mr. *Blandy's* Death, who languished till the 14th of the same Month, when he expired.

That other Part of the same Letter, where 'tis said, *I am going forward with all convenient Speed in the Business, and have not only a fatiguing Time of it, but am sometimes in the greatest Frights, there being so many constantly about me, to be kept insensible of the Affair,* is plain enough meant, that when she thought of the wicked Deed she was about to perform, it brought her Conscience to fly in her Face, as she advanced ; and that the Servants of the House were the great Obstacles in her Way.

I shall not take up the Reader's Time any longer, in making Observations on the Letters ; only observe in general, that they all shew that the Writer was sensibly touched, at such Times as they were endeavouring to practice the hellish Device, to destroy the old Gentleman ; and also, that sometimes their Consciences led them to think of what the Consequence of such an enormous Crime must be.

I shall now return to Mr. *Cranstoun*. While he was at *Furnes* he was very thoughtful, and was never observed to be once in a merry Hu-

mour ; frequently staying in his Room all Day, except Meal-Times, and praying very devoutly.

On his finding himself once very ill, tho' it was six Weeks before he died, (for he recovered and went Abroad after that Illness) he made a Will, all which he wrote with his own Hand ; in which he left, after paying his Debts, at *Furnes*, to M. *Malfot*, where he lived, and his Funeral Charges, all his paternal Fortune, of 1500*l.* to his Daughter, by his Wife, who lives with her Relations, at *Hexham*, in *Northumberland*.

This 1500*l.* which he left in his Will to his Child, was what was left him on the Death of his Father ; and the Estate of his elder Brother, the Lord *Cranstoun*, was charged with the Payment of it ; and he received 75*l. per Annum*, in Lieu of the principal Sum, 50*l. per Annum* of which, was settled, by Order of the Lords of Sessions, in *Scotland*, on his Wife, at the Time when he had Villainy sufficient to bring a Cause before the Court of Sessions, to set aside his Marriage ; and from that Time she has received it, for the Support of her and her Child.

The Gentlewoman he had married, and was wicked enough to deny, was the Daughter of the late Sir *David Murray*, Baronet, and Sister of

of the present Sir *David Murray*, who is now in the Service of the King of *France*, in the *East-Indies*: This young Gentleman was unfortunate enough, to take Part with the young Pretender in the late Rebellion, being Nephew to Mr. *Murray*, of *Broughton*, the Pretender's then Secretary; and after the Battle of *Culloden* was taken Prisoner, and tried at *Carlisle*, where he received Sentence of Death as a Rebel; but for his Youth, not being then above eighteen Years of Age, he was reprieved and transported.

One Circumstance that appeared on the Trial of the Legality of his Marriage, with Miss *Murray*, was very particular, as he had the Folly, as well as Wickedness, to deny the same; and that was, a Marriage-Settlement of 50*l. per Annum*, which he had made on her in his own Hand-Writing, was produced and proved; which was confirmed by the Lords of Sessions.

After the Burial of Mr. *Cranstoun*, at *Furnes*, a Letter was sent to his Wife, at *Hexham*, to inform her of it, and another was sent to the Lady Dowager *Cranstoun*, his Mother; to the last of which an Answer was soon returned, which was to desire, that all his Papers and Will might be sealed up, and sent to his Brother, Lord *Cranstoun*, in *Scotland*, with an Account of what was owing,

owing, and to whom, in Order for their being paid ; but his Cloaths, which consisted of some very rich Waistcoats, were desired to be sold at Furnes ; which was done accordingly.

He frequently declared his Life was a Burthen to him, and in his Death he suffered great Torments ; for his Body was so much swoln, that it was expected he would have bursted for several Days before he died.

As Miss *Blandy* had given an Account in her Narrative, that it was him who first proposed a private Marriage with each other, he solemnly declared, just before he died, that he could not be positive which of them proposed it first ; but that he was certain, that it was Miss *Blandy* that desired and insisted it should be so, and was very pressing till it was done : And he often called upon God Almighty to forgive both his Crimes, and those of Miss *Blandy*, particularly, he said hers, as she had died with asserting so many enormous Falsities contained in that Account, said to be published by her Orders and Inspection.

F I N I S.

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